

## GOP attacks Dems' \$1.9T COVID-19 relief bill from all angles

By A. FRAM, R. ALONSO-ZALDIVAR and K. FREKING  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Republicans are attacking the Democrats' \$1.9 trillion COVID-19 relief package as too costly, economically damaging and overtly partisan, an all-angles attempt to derail new President Joe Biden's top priority as it starts moving through a Congress his party controls only narrowly. Four House committees worked Thursday on their pieces of sweeping legislation that would send \$1,400 payments to many Americans. It would also provide hundreds of billions for state and local governments and to boost vaccination efforts, raise tax credits for children and increase unemployment benefits.

Democratic leaders hope for House passage later this month, with Senate approval and a bill on Biden's desk by mid-March. "This is the moment," said Ways and Means Committee Chairman Richard Neal, D-Mass., citing the pandemic's human and economic toll. As committees worked, Republicans proposed amendments spotlighting what they see as the legislation's soft spots. Their themes were clear: Democrats are overspending, hurting workers and employers' job markets, being too generous to some immigrants, inviting fraud and rewarding political allies — allegations that Democrats dismiss as ludicrous.

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In this Feb. 9, 2021, photo, President Joe Biden meets with business leaders to discuss a coronavirus relief package in the Oval Office of the White House in Washington.

Associated Press



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## White House says it will defer to CDC on reopening schools

By **COLLIN BINKLEY**  
AP Education Writer

Facing criticism that President Joe Biden has not acted aggressively enough on reopening schools, the White House on Thursday said it's aiming for a full reopening but will defer to science experts on how to achieve it in the middle of a pandemic.

The White House drew criticism this week when it said schools would be considered opened if they teach in-person at least one day a week. Asked about it Thursday, press secretary Jen Psaki said Biden hopes to get students in the classroom five days a week as soon as it's safe.

Psaki did not detail a timeline for that milestone, how-



White House press secretary Jen Psaki speaks during a press briefing at the White House, Thursday, Feb. 11, 2021, in Washington.

Associated Press

na has the "background, qualifications and temperament" to become secretary.

"He's stressed the need for students to get back in school, and that's now finally a bipartisan mission," Burr said.

Biden has made schools a priority as he works to bolster a battered economy, but critics say he has scaled back on his goals amid growing challenges. His initial pledge in December was to reopen "the majority of our schools" in his first 100 days in office. He later specified that the goal applied only to elementary and middle schools. And this week, the White House said schools would be considered open as long as they teach in-person once a week.

Republicans say Biden is backpedaling on his pledge and caving to teachers unions that have opposed reopening until their demands are met. Biden's critics say schools are safe to open now, citing CDC findings that, with the right precautions, it's generally safe to hold classes in-person.

Asked why parents should be satisfied with just one day of in-person teaching per week, Psaki appeared to back away from her previous stance. "They shouldn't be. I wouldn't be, as a parent," she said.

Biden's \$1.9 trillion pandemic relief plan includes \$130 billion to help schools upgrade buildings, buy protective equipment and take other steps to reopen. House Democrats advanced that portion of the package this week using a special process enabling them to pass the bill down party lines. □

ever, saying the administration will act on new school guidance that's expected to be released Friday by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

"I can assure any parent listening that his objective, his commitment, is to ensuring schools are open five days a week," Psaki said at a press briefing. "That's what he wants to achieve, and we are going to lead with science and the advice they are giving us."

The task of helping schools reopen will fall to the CDC, Psaki said, and to Biden's pick for education secretary, Miguel Cardona, whose nomination was approved Thursday by the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee.

The panel voted 17-5 in favor of Cardona, who is expected to be approved by the full Senate. He won support from the committee's ranking Republican, Sen. Richard Burr of North Carolina, who said Cardo-

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# GOP attacks Dems' \$1.9T COVID-19 relief bill from all angles

Continued from Front

The proposals signaled that Biden's plan faces solid Republican opposition in a House and Senate where Democrats have few votes to spare, while forcing Democrats to take positions that could tee up GOP campaign ads for the 2022 elections.

There were amendments to reduce the \$400 extra in weekly jobless benefits Democrats want to provide through August and exempt the smallest businesses from Democrats' plans to gradually raise the minimum wage to \$15 hourly from \$7.25. Others would limit emergency grants for undergraduates to U.S. citizens and bar federal subsidies for some job-based health insurance to people without Social Security numbers, effectively targeting many immigrants. Other GOP proposals would put strings on emergency funds to help schools reopen safely, requiring that schools offer in-person classes or give the money to parents for education savings accounts if they remain closed. Still others would make sure assistance for renters, homeowners and the airline industry didn't extend long after the pandemic ends, and divide \$26 billion for urban transportation systems

between cities and rural areas, which many Republicans represent.

"I don't know if the White House knows this, but you're supposed to be creating jobs, not killing them," said Texas Rep. Kevin Brady, the top Republican on the Ways and Means panel. He said while his party has backed over \$3 trillion in earlier pandemic relief bills, "whatever this rushed, partisan, special interest 'stimulus' package does, it comes with no bipartisan discussion, no opportunity for finding common ground."

Biden campaigned on reuniting a country riven by President Donald Trump's divisive four years. He met two weeks ago with 10 GOP senators to discuss the COVID-19 plan in a session that seemed cordial but has produced no visible movement.

Democrats say attempts to compromise with Republicans wasted time and resulted in a package that proved too small when President Barack Obama sought an economic stimulus compromise in 2009, his first year. They want to finish this initial Biden goal without any stumbles and before emergency jobless benefits expire on March 14.

House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif.,

said in a statement that Democrats were pushing "liberal wish-list policies" and accused them of "siding with teachers' unions," mostly Democratic-friendly organizations that have largely opposed reopening schools until they are safer. McCarthy, eyeing 2022 elections that he hopes will make him speaker of a GOP-run House, suggested Republicans were ready to work to restore jobs, reopen schools and provide vaccines "to those who want it." But he said Democrats' "policy distractions will only make America weaker and bring our recovery to a halt."

One by one, committees were rejecting GOP amendments, mostly on party-line votes. Democrats disputed Republican assertions that, for example, a proposed \$400 weekly pandemic unemployment benefit was so generous it would discourage people from seeking jobs.

"The whole force of this amendment is to not, quote unquote, spoil people by giving them too much money," said Rep. Gwen Moore, D-Wis. She said it suggested people who've lost jobs do not "deserve to live above a starvation-level wage."

Even so, Republicans voiced concerns about the sheer size of the \$1.9 tril-



In this Nov. 12, 2020 file photo House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., talks during a news conference on Capitol Hill in Washington.

Associated Press

lion package. "Big doesn't necessarily mean good," said Rep. Anthony Gonzalez, R-Ohio. "Let's go smart. Let's go targeted and let's solve the actual need."

The Congressional Budget Office expects the economy to add an average of 521,000 jobs a month this year, a sign of robust hiring made possible in part by government aid. But those gains will likely hinge on containing the virus. Employers kicked off 2021 by adding a mere 49,000 jobs in January as deaths from the disease curbed economic activity.

Meanwhile, House Democrats unveiled new details of their plan.

The Energy and Commerce Committee's section of the plan, exceeding \$180 billion, would provide billions

for COVID-19 vaccination, testing, contact tracing and treatments. It would invest \$1.75 billion in "genomic sequencing," or DNA mapping of virus samples, to identify potentially more dangerous coronavirus mutations and study how fast they are spreading.

It would also advance long-standing Democratic priorities like increasing coverage under the Obama-era Affordable Care Act.

It dangles a fiscal carrot in front of a dozen states, mainly in the South, that have not yet taken up the law's Medicaid expansion to cover more low-income adults, proposing a temporary 5% increase in federal aid to states that newly expand the health care program for lower-income people. □

# Biden decree ends 'emergency' that Trump used to build wall



This March 2, 2019 photo shows a Customs and Border Control agent patrols on the US side of a razor-wire-covered border wall along the Mexico east of Nogales, Ariz.

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden has officially ended the "national emergency" that President

Donald Trump declared in order to take money from the Pentagon to build a wall along the U.S.-Mexico

border.

The White House released a letter Thursday from Biden to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi notifying Congress that he had rescinded his predecessor's February 2019 proclamation.

It was a formality since Biden ordered a halt to border wall construction shortly after he took office. In his letter, the president said Trump's declaration of a national emergency had been "unwarranted" and that he had directed that "no more American taxpayer dollars be diverted to construct a border wall." He also ordered a review of all money spent on the project so far.

The U.S. has been building border walls for decades under both Democratic and Republican administrations. Trump made the effort a centerpiece of his first presidential campaign, vowing to build a wall across the entire border and have Mexico pay for it. Trump took roughly \$6 billion from military funds under the national emergency he declared after Congress refused his demands for wall funding, leading to the longest government shutdown in history.

The Supreme Court upheld a legal challenge to Trump's action in a 5-4 vote in July 2019.

By the end of his adminis-

tration, the U.S. had completed more than 450 miles (720 kilometers) of new wall construction along the 2,000-mile (3,145 kilometer) border. Much of the construction was in areas where there had already been some form of barrier. Trump administration officials said the border wall slowed down smugglers and people crossing the border illegally so they could be more easily apprehended. Critics said there were more effective tools for enforcement and that parts of the new construction damaged environmentally sensitive areas or were in places where a wall wasn't needed. □



# Judge declines new arrest warrant for Kyle Rittenhouse

By **TODD RICHMOND**  
**Associated Press**

**MADISON, Wis. (AP)** — A judge on Thursday refused prosecutors' request to issue a new arrest warrant for an 18-year-old from Illinois accused of killing two people during a police brutality protest in Wisconsin last summer.

Kenosha County Assistant District Attorney Thomas Binger alleged that Kyle Rittenhouse failed to update his address when he moved out of his Antioch apartment in November, amounting to a bail violation.

In addition to a new arrest warrant, Binger asked Judge Bruce Schroeder to increase Rittenhouse's bail by \$200,000. Rittenhouse's attorneys countered that Rittenhouse is in hiding due to threats.

Schroeder refused both of Binger's requests. During a testy hearing the judge said people out on bail often fail to update their addresses and aren't arrested. He ordered Rittenhouse attorney Mark Richards to turn over Rittenhouse's current physical address but said it would be sealed to the public and only he and the Kenosha County Sheriff's Department would have access to it.

The judge refused to give



This undated booking photo from the Antioch, Ill., Police Department shows Kyle Rittenhouse.

**Associated Press**

Binger the address, saying he didn't want more violence in Kenosha. The move — and the comment — left Binger flabbergasted.

"I hope you're not suggesting sharing this with our office would lead to further violence," Binger said. "We are not the public. We are the prosecuting agency. I have never heard of a situation where the information has been withheld from my office."

Schroeder said the sheriff could handle any further bail violations. Binger coun-

tered that Rittenhouse doesn't live in Kenosha County so the sheriff can't touch him. Schroeder cut Binger off in mid-sentence and ended the hearing.

According to prosecutors, Rittenhouse, who is white, came to Kenosha on Aug. 25 to protect businesses as the city was in the throes of chaotic protests after a white police officer shot Jacob Blake, who is Black, in the back during a domestic disturbance. Rittenhouse was 17 at the time.

Rittenhouse allegedly opened fire on protesters

Joseph Rosenbaum, Anthony Huber and Gaige Grosskreutz with an AR-15-style rifle. Rosenbaum and Huber were killed. Grosskreutz was wounded. Rittenhouse faces multiple charges, including two homicide counts. He has argued he fired in self-defense after the protesters attacked him.

Black Lives Matter supporters have painted him as a trigger-happy white supremacist, but some conservatives see him as a symbol for gun rights and have rallied around him, gener-

ating \$2 million for his bail in November.

Binger said he suspected that Rittenhouse had moved in November but it wasn't confirmed until a hearing notice was returned as undeliverable in January and detectives subsequently found someone else living there.

Richards acknowledged that he should have updated the address but stressed that Rittenhouse has made every court appearance and isn't a flight risk.

"We have nothing to fear," Richards said. "The truth will set my client free."

Last month, Rittenhouse was captured on video at a Wisconsin bar wearing a T-shirt that read "Free as (expletive)," drinking and flashing white supremacist signs.

Five men serenaded with him a song that has become the anthem for neo-fascist group The Proud Boys. He could legally drink in the bar because he was with his mother.

Huber's father, John, told the judge during the hearing that he thinks Rittenhouse's bail should be set at \$4 million.

"How would you feel if the killer of your son was just able to walk free and make videos in bars and just live it up?" he said. □

## At least 5 killed in massive crash on icy Texas interstate



Vehicles are piled up after a fatal crash on Interstate 35 near Fort Worth, Texas on Thursday, Feb. 11, 2021.

**Associated Press**

By **JAMIE STENGLE**  
**Associated Press**

**DALLAS (AP)** — At least five people were killed and dozens injured Thursday in a massive crash involving 75 to 100 vehicles on

an icy Texas interstate, police said, as a winter storm dropped freezing rain, sleet and snow on parts of the U.S.

At the scene of the crash on Interstate 35 near down-

town Fort Worth, a tangle of semitrailers, cars and trucks had crashed into each other and had turned every which way, with some vehicles on top of others.

"The vehicles are just mangled," said Matt Zavadsky, spokesman for MedStar, which provides the ambulance service for the area. "Multiple tow trucks are on scene. It's going to take a lot to disentangle this wreck."

Thirty-six people were taken to hospitals from the crash, several with critical injuries, Zavadsky said. Police set up a reunification center for family members at a community center.

"The roadway was so treacherous from the ice that several of the first re-

sponders were falling on the scene," Zavadsky said. He said his crews carry a sand and salt mixture in the ambulances, which they began using at the scene. At one point, he said, one of the ambulances was hit, but it sustained only minor damage and the crew members were fine. Farther south, in suburban Austin, more than two dozen vehicles were involved in a pileup on an icy highway, and five people were taken to a hospital, emergency officials said.

The storm came as a polar vortex — swirling air that normally sits over the Earth's poles — has moved near the U.S.-Canada border, resulting in colder weather farther south than

usual, said Steve Goss, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service's Storm Prediction Center in Norman, Oklahoma.

"As a result we're getting unusually or unseasonably cold air that's spilling south across a good portion of the United States east of the Rocky Mountains," he said.

In Tennessee, police responded to about 30 traffic collisions and some flights were delayed at Memphis International Airport after freezing rain and sleet fell. In Kentucky, the governor declared a state of emergency to free up funding and help agencies coordinate as they responded to reports of slick roads and downed power lines. □



# European deep freeze serves up fun, frustrations and danger

By MIKE CORDER

Associated Press

THE HAGUE, Netherlands

(AP) — Three workers in a boat hacked away at ice Thursday to create a watery barrier around the Dutch prime minister's office, while others in the Netherlands tentatively tested the frozen surfaces of lakes and canals to see if they were safe to skate on. The deep freeze gripping large parts of Europe is serving up both fun and frustrations, with heavy snow cutting power to thousands of homes in central Slovakia and snarling traffic in the east of the country, while snow on Dutch roads and sidewalks allowed some parents to pull children to school on sleds instead of riding them on bicycles.

Britain experienced its coldest night for a quarter century, with the temperature falling to minus 22.9 Celsius (minus 9.2 Fahrenheit) in Braemar, northeast Scotland — the lowest recorded in the U.K. since 1995, according to the Met Office weather service.



A woman takes pictures of icicles on a jetty at the Afsluitdijk, a dike separating IJsselmeer inland sea, and the Wadden Sea, Netherlands, Thursday, Feb. 11, 2021.

Associated Press

Most of Britain has experienced days of sub-zero temperatures and snowfall in the wake of winter Storm Darcy.

The cold snap froze the famous fountains in London's Trafalgar Square and forced the temporary closure of some U.K. coronavirus

vaccination sites.

Icicles coating a jetty on the frozen inland IJsselmeer Sea north of Amsterdam drew photographers, while those hanging a house in the central German city of Erfurt attracted the attention of firefighters, who snapped them off.

In France, cold weather and ice alerts were in force for northern swathes of the country, as thermometers dipped well below freezing, making roads and pavements treacherous. Among the coldest places was the riverfront city of Nancy, where the weather

bureau reported minus 11 degrees Celsius (12 degrees Fahrenheit) before dawn on Thursday.

Berlin police said a man rescued alive from a frozen pond in the German capital has died. Police said Thursday that firefighters pulled the 43-year-old man out of the water after he had been submerged for more than two hours and managed to revive him, but he died in the hospital Wednesday evening.

The man and three others had made holes in the ice to go ice swimming.

Greece, meanwhile, has been enjoying spring-like weather with temperatures in the 20s Celsius range (68 degrees Fahrenheit and up). But the southern nation is set to join the rest of Europe in the deep freeze in the coming days, with snow possible even in the capital, Athens.

In Albania, authorities evacuated several families, hundreds of sheep and thousands of chickens after the Buna River in the northwest burst its banks. □

## Interim Libya leader in eastern city in outreach to factions

By RAMI MUSA and NOHA ELHENNAWY

Associated Press

BENGHAZI, Libya (AP) —

The president of Libya's newly elected interim government arrived Thursday in the eastern city of Benghazi, the stronghold of the divided country's eastern factions, as part of a campaign to foster unity ahead

of national elections in December.

Mohammad Younes Menfi, chairman of Libya's Presidential Council, arrived from Athens, where he had been living for the past three years, and immediately met with dozens of tribal elders, academics and activists inside the VIP lounge at Benina airport,

which serves Benghazi.

His visit follows a U.N.-sponsored conference last week in which delegates from Libya's warring sides picked four leaders to guide the nation ahead of the December elections.

The election of the presidential council was a major if uncertain — step toward unifying the North African country and ending one of the intractable conflicts left behind by the Arab Spring.

Since 2015, Libya has been divided between two governments, one in the east and another in the west, each backed by a vast array of militias.

In April 2019, Khalifa Hifter, a military commander allied with the eastern government, launched an offensive to seize the capital, Tripoli.

His campaign failed after 14 months of fighting and last October, the U.N. con-

vinced both parties to sign a cease-fire agreement and embark on a political dialogue.

Menfi, a diplomat from the country's east, was picked to head the Presidential Council, which includes two other officials.

The forum also chose Abdul Hamid Mohammed Dbeibah, a powerful businessman from the western city of Misrata, as interim prime minister.

Each member of the three-man council represents a region of old Libya: Tripolitania in the west, Cyrenaica in the east, and Fezzan in the southwest. The appointment of an interim government capped months of U.N.-brokered talks that resulted in an agreement to hold elections on Dec. 24.

"Our objective is to achieve unity and true reconciliation and to collaborate with all in order to

end the suffering," Menfi tweeted shortly before his arrival. Shortly after leaving the airport, he met with Hifter at his forces' headquarters in the village of Rajma, 27 kilometers (17 miles) east of Benghazi.

During the meeting, Hifter reiterated his backing of the new transitional authorities and his support for a "peaceful and democratic alternation of power" in Libya, according to a statement released by his office.

Hifter had already welcomed the appointment of the new government, hailing its leaders as "national figures." Although Menfi comes originally from the eastern city of Tobruk, some observers argued that he is politically allied to western factions, which may undermine the transitional authorities' ability to represent the political interests of the east. □



In this Jan. 17, 2020 file photo, Libyan Gen. Khalifa Hifter joins a meeting with the Greek Foreign Minister Nikos Dendias in Athens.

Associated Press



# Belarus leader vows to defeat foreign-backed 'rebellion'

**KYIV, Ukraine (AP)** — The authoritarian leader of Belarus on Thursday slammed six months of demonstrations against him as a foreign-directed "rebellion," and he announced plans for constitutional reforms, which the opposition has rejected as window dressing. Speaking to 2,700 participants of the All-Belarus People's Assembly in the capital of Minsk, President Alexander Lukashenko alleged that "very powerful forces" abroad were behind the protests.

Lukashenko didn't elaborate, but in the past several months, he has repeatedly accused the West of fomenting the protests.

"We must stand up to them no matter what, and this year will be decisive," he said at the opening of the two-day assembly made up of delegates nominated by labor collectives in sync with state-controlled unions loyal to Lukashenko.

He convened the group to discuss plans for the country's development, but the opposition has denounced it as an attempt to shore up his rule and soothe public



**Belarusian Prime Minister Roman Golovchenko, front left, Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko, centre, Speaker of the Council of the Republic of Belarus Natalya Kochanova, front right, listen to the national anthem at the opening of the All-Belarus People's Assembly in Minsk, Belarus, Thursday, Feb. 11, 2021.**

anger with vague promises of reform.

Lukashenko, who has ruled Belarus for more than 26 years, vaguely promised Thursday to step down someday, saying that "the time will come and other people will come." He said a set of constitutional

changes would be drafted later this year and put to a nationwide vote in early 2022.

The opposition has urged Belarusians to take to the streets to protest the assembly. Police detained several people in Minsk and other cities, according to the Vi-

asna human rights group. Mass protests have gripped the ex-Soviet nation of 9.5 million people since official results from the Aug. 9 election gave Lukashenko a landslide victory. The main opposition candidate, Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, and her supporters

have dismissed the result as rigged, and some poll workers also have described voting manipulation.

Speaking at the assembly, Lukashenko defended the election's validity, admitting that local officials could have tinkered with it to show him winning 80% of the vote but insisting he won a strong majority anyway.

"If some don't like 80, let it be 76 or even 68!" he said. "But we won it anyway, we were backed by an overwhelming majority."

Authorities have cracked down hard on the largely peaceful demonstrations, the biggest of which attracted up to 200,000 people. Police have used stun grenades, tear gas, water cannons and truncheons to disperse the rallies. According to human rights advocates, more than 30,000 people have been detained since the protests began, and thousands of them were brutally beaten. During his tenure, Lukashenko has relentlessly stifled dissent and relied on cheap energy and other subsidies from his main ally, Russia. □

Associated Press

## Opposition calls on Haitians to 'rise up' as strife deepens

**By EVENS SANON**  
**Associated Press**

**PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)**

— Hundreds of Haitians chanted "Down with kidnapping! Down with dictatorship!" as they marched through the streets of Port-au-Prince on Wednesday, bolstering opposition leaders who stepped up their demands that President Jovenel Moïse resign.

The latest protest is the biggest one yet this year, and it comes just days after Moïse announced that police had arrested nearly two dozen people accused of an alleged coup conspiracy, including a Supreme Court judge, who was ordered released Wednesday.

Opposition leaders labeled the arrests as political repression while critics accuse Moïse of trying to become more powerful.

"We're all asking for the population to rise up," said former Sen. Youri Latortue, one of Haiti's opposition leaders. "We're not backing down."

The opposition coalition recently announced that another Supreme Court judge, Joseph Mécène Jean-Louis, had become Haiti's supposed transitional president. Jean-Louis accepted the position, which no one in the international community has recognized.

The opposition claims that Moïse's five-year term ended on Feb. 7, but Moïse has reiterated that it ends in February 2022 since he wasn't sworn in until 2017. Prior to that, a provisional president ruled Haiti for one year following chaotic elections marred by allegations of fraud.

The situation in Haiti has

caught the attention of the international community, prompting a public statement from the U.S. Embassy in Haiti on Tuesday, a day after Moïse's administration basically fired three Superior Court judges by announcing that they had been forced into retirement. Among the three is Jean-Louis and Yvickel Dabrézil, who was arrested on Sunday.

The U.S. Embassy said it was scrutinizing the order to determine if it's legal.

"We are deeply concerned about any actions that risk damaging Haiti's democratic institutions," the embassy said as it called on Moïse to hold overdue legislative elections.

Moïse has been ruling by presidential decree for more than a year after dissolving a majority of Parlia-

ment in January 2020 amid a delay in legislative elections given political gridlock and protests that paralyzed the country in 2019. His administration also has faced an increase in violence and kidnappings and a deepening poverty,

with protesters on Wednesday also demanding a better life.

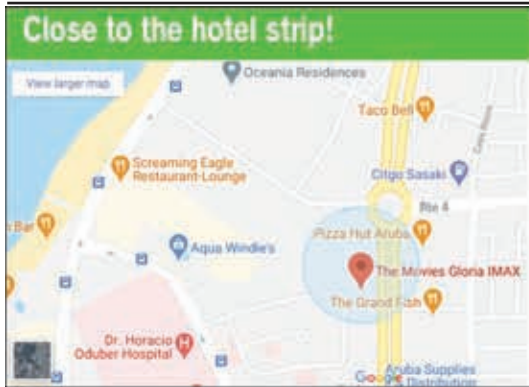
The peaceful protest was interrupted by police firing tear gas on demonstrators and on a group of journalists. □



**A protester holds up a copy of the Haitian constitution during a protest to demand the resignation of Haiti's president Jovenel Moïse in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Wednesday, Feb. 10, 2021.**

Associated Press





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## Mexico president warns against false claims of open U.S. doors

**MEXICO CITY (AP)** — Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador said Thursday many migrants believe the “doors are open” to the United States following the election of President Joe Biden.

López Obrador said that wasn't true, and urged migrants not to believe traffickers who tell them they could get legal status immediately. He noted that he welcomed Biden's policy proposal, but that it would take time to be approved and implemented. “Now, for example, that there is a U.S. immigration policy to regularize the situation of migrants, Mexicans and our Central American brothers, people think that now the doors are open, that President Biden is going to immediately regularize all migrants,” López Obrador said.

“It is not true that everyone can go now to the United States and they will be regularized, that has not been defined yet,” he said. “Our brother migrants should have this information so that they won't be deceived by human traffickers, who paint a rosy picture.”

In Washington, White House press secretary Jen Psaki said Thursday a “vast majority” of migrants continue to be turned away at the U.S. southern border. Psaki added that Biden is committed to moving away from the Trump administration's immigration policies but it's going to take time. “The President is committed to putting in place, in partnership with our Department of Homeland Security, a moral and humane process for processing people at the border but that capacity is limited,” Psaki said. “Right now,



Central American migrants rest at La 72 shelter in Tenosique, Tabasco state, Mexico, Tuesday, Feb. 9, 2021.

Associated Press

and it means we're just not equipped to process people at the pace that we would like to do.”

She added that the administration is concerned about migrants arriving at the border. “We don't want people to put themselves at danger at a time where it is not the right time to come,” she said.

López Obrador also cited the recent massacre of 19 people, including at least 14 Guatemalan migrants, as justification for his policy of stopping Central American migrants at Mexico's southern border with Guatemala.

López Obrador said the massacre showed that it was too dangerous to allow migrants to travel through drug cartel turf in northern Mexico.

“This was always our argument, that we need to protect migrants, watch out for them,” he said. “If they enter (Mexico) and spread out, we cannot keep an eye on them or protect

them, and they wind up in the hands of organized crime, they are in danger.” Twelve members of an elite police force in the northern border state of Tamaulipas have been charged in the Jan. 22 killing of the 14 Guatemalans and at least two suspected Mexican migrant traffickers. They were killed, their bodies piled in a pickup truck and burned so badly that three corpses have still not been identified. Under pressure from former U.S. President Donald Trump in 2018 and 2019, López Obrador posted thousands of immigration, military and National Guard agents at Mexico's border with Guatemala to stop caravans of Central American migrants from entering the country. □

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**Locations: The Cove Mall (8AM-10PM) and Medcare at the Mill Resort (8:30AM-12:30PM).**

## ATSA makes a donation to The Aruba Soccer Academy

**PALM BEACH —Two successful island organizations banded together to create a sporting venue for the benefit of the local community, namely ATSA and ASA.**

The Aruba Soccer Acade-

my, ASA, founded in March 2016, provides expert support to kids with a passion for soccer, ages 4 to 15.

The Aruba Timeshare Association, ATSA, is the legal entity representing the special interests of timeshare

within the island's tourism sector. The organization picks an annual essential and relevant cause worthy of supporting, and makes a donation toward one of its specific needs. ASA recently invested in a mini soccer field for its members. The



### Aruba to me

day Newspaper, Caribbean Speed Printers and any of its affiliated companies to use said materials, as well as names, likeness, etc. for promotional purposes without compensation.

Last but not least: check out our website, Instagram and Facebook page! Thank you for supporting our free newspaper, we strive to make you a happy reader every day again.

For today we received some amazing pictures from **Patricia Scimeca** from Jackson, NJ. She wrote:

Aruba to me is.... Bon Bini, welcome in Papiamentu. That is what Aruba is to me, the feeling of being welcome. Arubans are the most welcoming, kind, loving, sharing and wonderfully nice people. We have been coming to Aruba for 38 straight years and hope to continue for many more. We purchased Playa Linda before it was even built and from way back then to today we love coming here every year. Yes, the weather is awesome, ocean beautiful, sunsets spectacular, and the occasional rainbow so lovely, but it is the people that make Aruba so special. The smiling face on our beach attendant, our terrific housekeeper, the efficient concierge, the helpful security people, restaurant owners, the maître d' at a restaurant, the server of your food, and of course, the Aloe Man – let's face it: everyone. So that is what Aruba is to me....



**ORANJESTAD — You are back and we would like to portrait you! By inviting you to send us your favorite vacation picture while enjoying our Happy Island.**

Complete the sentence: Aruba to me is ..... Send your picture with that text (including your name and where you are from) to: news@arubatoday.com and we will publish your vacation memory. Isn't that a special way to keep your best moments alive? Please do note: By submitting photos, text or any other materials, you give permission to The Aruba To-

mini pitch is ideal for training in smaller groups, which allows ASA to offer more variety and options for when stadiums are closed. ASA regularly organizes local soccer camps during vacations throughout the year, and welcomes international visitors. As it celebrates its fifth anniversary, the training academy boasts more than 5,000 Facebook followers.

"We believe it's important to contribute to our community, and this project promoting good sportsmanship among kids, is pivotal to the well-balance development of youth here. ATSA picked the Aruba Soccer Academy foundation as recipient of a donation this year, for their project, to help further build the mini soccer field. Besides improved overall sportsmanship, players train together, and then play each other in opposing teams in competition, nurturing tolerance and understanding."

ASA's program relies on non-club based soccer training with professional coaches on weekdays in

different districts on the island. ASA hopes to encourage youngsters to enjoy the game, while in a safe and friendly learning environment where they can hone their skill and tactics.

ATSA established in 1994, currently counts the active membership of the majority of timeshare properties in Aruba, as well as select condominium co-op associations. The association works on a local level, as a supporting member of AHATA, the Aruba Hotel and Tourism Association, and with other local organizations and Government entities.

On a regional level, where Aruba continues to receive recognition as a model timeshare destination, ATSA has professional ties with CHA, the Caribbean Hotel Association and also benefits from continuous collaboration with ARDA, the American Resort Development Association.

For more info on ASA you can contact David Abdul: davidabdul89@gmail.com.



**MONDAY MADNESS AND BINGO ARE TEMPORARILY SUSPENDED**

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## Aruba Walk-in Clinic: Meet Dr. Lili Beke: a skilled person and humane doctor at heart



**PALM BEACH — Doctor Lili Beke from the Walk-In Clinic has a solid reputation, built on more than 35 years of experience as a medical doctor. Both tourists and locals feel great with her for these simple reasons: communicative, skilled, empathetic and trustworthy. She has all the qualities of a great doctor. When you feel sick during vacation, you want it out of your system as soon as possible. Don't look any further; help is just around the corner. Unique is the fact that you can walk into this clinic without an appointment.**

During the interview with Aruba Today the doctor keeps on getting calls from patients and every single call is answered with the all the patience in the world. The calm of Dr. Beke alone will ease you and with her experience, she makes sure that the bad luck on vacation is turned into a bad memory in the blink of an eye. Both locals and tourists are fans of the humane way Dr. Beke goes about her job.

### What makes a doctor a good doctor?

A good doctor needs first to develop qualities of patience, patience and more patience to maintain the ability to care despite her patient's conditions. She needs to take time to explain and educate before medication and take time to think about the proper decision, this might not always be necessarily what is written in the textbooks. Taking time to explain and understand, choosing the language to fit each and

every patient, medical school does not teach this, yet this is what defines Dr. Beke. Covid times


Dr. Beke: "My priority during the Covid-19 period is attending as much patients as I can and that so far went very well. We have been busier as normal, but we managed. Now that the tourists are back again we shift from locals only to a mix of tourists and locals who walk in my practice." The government imposed protocol for covid-19 which is strictly followed and after each patient the room is thoroughly cleaned." Her practice is, literally, a stone-throw's distance from the high-rise hotels offering tourists quick and efficient service. "I noticed that many look for that personal touch and they do not like the assistance on distance by sending pics on a cell phone. I see my patients and this is important as I need to feel them."

### Top 5 vacation illnesses

The most common reasons why patients walk into her clinic sound very familiar. Dr. Beke: "When on vacation you are excited so you mix meals, eat without control and combine this with more alcohol than usual resulting in an upset stomach. Digestion issues occur and when on a diet you can count on it that you will get sick." Throwing up, diarrhea, dehydration will be a bummer on your vacation. "Second occasion why people step in here is medication. They feel sick because they forgot to take their



medicines with them or simply think they don't need it on holiday. But of course the body does not work differently only because you are in another place." This happens especially with patients of higher age and many times with blood pressure medication and psychological medicines, the doctor explains. □



**Aruba  
WALK-IN  
CLINIC**

L.G. Beke-Martinez M.D. | Family Physician

**Palm Beach Aruba Walk-in Clinic**  
Unit 8 at "The Cove", Palm Beach  
Open Mon-Fri 10 am – 4 pm  
Sat 11.00 am – 4.00 pm  
(Friday afternoon 2pm– 4.30 pm)

Unit 9 at "The Cove", Palm Beach  
Open during weekdays 9am–12pm, 2.30 –5 pm  
Saturday, Sunday & Holidays 2 pm – 4 pm  
Phone: +297 588 0539  
Email: [lgbeke.md@gmail.com](mailto:lgbeke.md@gmail.com)





**ORANJESTAD —** What you see is what you get. These descriptions suit both the restaurant and the owner. Straight-forward, honest, pure and local. "Taste My Aruba is all about honest food, it is culture. Quality is my credo and my heart is in this place," says owner Nathaly de Mey, who personally selects the fish caught daily at the port. "We have a different menu every day depending on what the fishermen bring in." Taste My Aruba opened on July 10th, 2018; and this ship has been sailing steadily towards more and more great reviews. If it were not for the food, the enchanting outside terrace would be worth it all.

At Padu Lampe Plaza in the heart of Oranjestad, you will find a renovated monumental building which used to be the governor's mansion. Inside, it is all about local art and crafts, the creative center, Cosecha, is open during the day. At 6 p.m., you will find the most romantically-lit terrace under a canopy of trees with tables set up for you to indulge in delectable food. The most curious thing is this place is so unpretentious.

Ceviche, Lobster Tower, Grouper Fish Cakes and Lobster Bisque are some of the divine starters. Drunken Shrimp Linguini in Creamy Garlic Sauce or Lobster with Truffle Mash will make you happy. The entire menu improves your mood. But don't worry; there are also options for meat lovers.

#### Sustainable & local

"I buy local out of principle and I stick to that. I wish to support Arubans and by buying 100-300 kg of fish each week I give back to the fishermen and their families," says De Mey. She checks every fish she buys because in her opinion it is important to see how the catch is being handled. "We use everything from the head to the tail. The lobster is boiled and we make a bisque from the head while the tail is used for the Lobster Tower. The Grouper's body and head carry a lot of meat which goes into the fish cakes and the rest is used for the main course. We are fully sustainable." She calls her place a 'boutique fish shack'. Although we cannot agree on that because it is way more. Taste My Aruba is like Aruba's ever-blowing breeze, a fresh and honest surprise and located on a beautiful spot downtown. "Our guests are mainly tourists and they know how we work. If it's finished, it's finished because what we get from the sea is all we can offer you. The only foreign products I buy are my wild-caught shrimps from Norway and of course beef \_ we do not have cows on our tiny island."

#### Her story

De Mey lived in the United States for 16 years and another 17 years in Dublin, Ireland. "The season in Dublin runs from March to September as after that it gets cold. My birthday is in October so I thought; let me come home to celebrate and I will stay for the cold season in Aruba." She did not leave again. "In Dublin, I ran a culinary business where we would hit various eateries in trendy places during a culinary walk. I started this here too, but everywhere I went the food was standing there forever. Do not get me wrong, I like pastechi but it should not be eaten from a hot box, only fresh." She is firm not to have her food laying

## Restaurant Taste My Aruba: Sustainable, Sea-to-table Savor



around, they make it as you order. "So this place came available and I thought; let me turn it into this posh sandwich shop with everything fresh and all kinds of bread. But it is simply too hot during the day and my kitchen space is only 23 m2." Her clientele were government employees grabbing a sandwich and coffee on their way to work or picking up lunch. It went well but as De Mey says: "To make it half you need to sell 1000 sandwiches at least, I had to make a change." One day she bought seven kilos of fish and prepared it on a George Foreman grill. "This is a historic building, so gas ovens are not allowed, everything needs to be electric. Nevertheless, I sold all the fish in one day, so I kept selling fish." Initially she did it by herself. She woke up every night at 3 a.m. to prepare and carrying foldable tables to her terrace every day. "I had to be here at 7 a.m., when the employees started passing by." Her principle of fresh and local food counted for her sandwiches and salads too. "This is me, my authenticity. I can't do it halfway."



Curious about Taste My Aruba? Make sure to make your reservation for one of the 32 seats. Hours are from 6pm-11pm, Monday through Saturday. Website: <https://taste-myaruba.com/reservations/>. □

## Celebrate Love!



**Valentine's Day is the celebration of love, beauty and romantic mood between couples and/or friends. It is a festive day where you would like to emphasize the importance of this special person in your life. You can do this in many ways, by sending cards, flowers, gifts, presents or arranging a wonderful day/night out.**

While enjoying your stay in Aruba you can make this day extra special by surprising your love with the help of Aruba Today. Despite the fact that we have wonderful dinner and gift options to choose from, advertised in our newspaper in the coming days up to February 14th, we can make this day even more

special.

Surprise your loved one with a picture of her/him or both of you in Aruba Today, accompanied by your personal message. Imagine taking your vacation breakfast in the morning while going through the newspaper and all of a sudden you see YOU. This will make her or his day for sure.

#### What Do You Do?

Send your selected picture (high resolution JPEG) with short personal Valentine message (maximum 40 words) to email: [news@arubatoday.com](mailto:news@arubatoday.com) by latest Friday February 12.

#### What Will We Do?

We will publish your picture and message in the local section of Aruba Today on Saturday February 13 in our printed newspaper and on our website and Facebook page.

Make her/him smile on this special day, do something different!

There is only one happiness in this life, to love and be loved. ... ~ George Sand □



# Autoworkers face uncertain future in an era of electric cars

By **TOM KRISHER and JOHN SEEWER**

**Associated Press**

**TOLEDO, Ohio (AP)** — When General Motors boldly announced its goal last month to make only battery-powered vehicles by 2035, it didn't just break from more than a century of internal combustion engines. It also clouded the future for 50,000 GM workers whose jobs could become obsolete far sooner than they knew.

The message was clear: As a greener U.S. economy edges closer, GM wants a factory workforce that will build only zero-emissions vehicles.

It won't happen overnight. But the likelihood is growing that auto workers who for decades built machines that run on petroleum will need to do different work in the next decade — or they might not have jobs.

If the history-making shift from internal combustion to electric power goes as GM, Ford and others envision, jobs that now make pistons and fuel injectors will be supplanted by the assembly of battery packs and electric motors.

Many of those components are now built overseas. But President Joe Biden has made development of a U.S. electric vehicle supply chain a key part of his plan to create 1 million auto industry jobs with electric vehicles.

Yet for auto workers, that future could be perilous. Factories will need fewer



**Stuart Hill, a United Auto Workers member who works at the General Motors Toledo Transmission Operations facility, poses in Toledo, Ohio, Tuesday, Feb. 2, 2021.**

**Associated Press**

workers, mainly because electric vehicles contain 30% to 40% fewer moving parts than petroleum-run vehicles. In addition, many union jobs could shift to lower pay as automakers buy EV parts from supply companies or form separate ventures to build components.

Most vulnerable in the transition will be roughly 100,000 workers at plants that make transmissions and engines for gas and diesel vehicles. They are people like Stuart Hill, one of 1,500 workers at GM's Toledo Transmission Plant in Ohio. At 38 years old and a GM employee for five years, Hill is decades from retirement and worries about the plant's future.

"It's something that's in the

back of my mind," Hill said. "Are they going to shut it down?"

While he and others hope GM will build EV parts in Toledo, there are no assurances that automakers will need as many workers in the EV era. A United Auto Workers paper from two years ago quotes Ford and Volkswagen executives as saying that EVs will reduce labor hours per vehicle by 30%.

"There are just less parts, so of course it stands to reason that there is going to be less labor," said Jeff Dokho, research director for the UAW.

"We're sort of at the beginning of that transition," said Teddy DeWitt, an assistant professor of management

at University of Massachusetts Boston who studies how jobs evolve over time. "It's not going to be just in the vehicle space."

The number of jobs lost will likely reach into the thousands, though no one knows precisely. And those losses will be made up, at least partly, by the green economy, from work building electric vehicle parts and charging stations to jobs created by wind and solar electricity generation. The most far-reaching manufacturing change since commercial production of internal combustion-driven vehicles began in 1886 will ripple to farm equipment, heavy trucks and even lawnmowers.

At Toledo Transmission, GM

workers make multi-speed gearboxes that eventually will be replaced by simpler EV drivetrains. For workers low on the seniority list, GM's plans mean that eventually, their services will likely no longer be needed.

"This is that moment to define where we go in the future," said Tony Totty, president of the UAW local at the Toledo plant.

Even though fully electric vehicles now constitute less than 2% of U.S. new vehicle sales, automakers face pressure to abandon internal combustion engines to fight climate change. California will ban sales of new gas-powered vehicles by 2035. European countries are imposing bans or pollution limits. Biden, in a push for green vehicles, pledged to build a half-million charging stations and convert federal vehicles to battery power.

But with American motorists paying average gas prices \$2 a gallon, trucks and SUVs have replaced more efficient cars as the nation's primary transportation mode.

That demand will keep Toledo in business for years. Yet there's little doubt the move to electricity is inexorable. About 2.5 million EVs were sold worldwide last year. IHS Markit expects that to increase 70% this year alone.

The trend has heightened anxiety even at plants now running flat-out to meet demand for GM trucks. □

## CBO expects \$2.3 trillion deficit before Biden relief plan

By **JOSH BOAK**

**The Associated Press**

**BALTIMORE (AP)** — The Congressional Budget Office says the federal government is on track for a \$2.3 trillion deficit this year, down roughly \$900 billion from last year when the coronavirus pandemic led Congress to provide historic amounts of financial aid. Stronger economic growth has helped to reduce the anticipated shortfall for this year. Still, the deficit could soon be revised upward if President Joe Biden's \$1.9

trillion coronavirus relief package becomes law. The additional aid — coming after roughly \$4 trillion was approved last year — would add more red ink once enacted, but isn't included in Thursday's CBO projections. Excluding the Biden plan, this year's deficit will equal 10.3% of gross domestic product, which is a measure of the total value of the economy's goods and services. The past two years have the highest deficits relative to GDP since 1945.

The CBO expects the budget deficit to fall to about \$1 trillion in 2022 as the economy heals and there is less need for government spending. Deficits are supposed to average 4.4% of GDP from 2022 to 2031. Several decades of deficit spending has meant that the total federal debt held by the public is slightly larger than GDP.

That figure is projected to rise to 107% of GDP by 2031 as spending on Medicare and Social Security increases. □



**This July 16, 2019, file photo shows the Capitol Dome in Washington.**

**Associated Press**



# Digital siege: Internet cuts become favored tool of regimes



In this Feb. 10, 2021, file photo, demonstrators flash a three-fingered symbol of resistance against the military coup and shout slogans calling for the release of detained Myanmar leader Aung San Suu Kyi during a protest in Mandalay, Myanmar.

Associated Press

By **KELVIN CHAN**  
AP Business Writer

**LONDON (AP)** — When army generals in Myanmar staged a coup last week, they briefly cut internet access in an apparent attempt to stymie protests. In Uganda, residents couldn't use Facebook, Twitter and other social media for weeks after a recent election. And in Ethiopia's northern Tigray region, the internet has been down for months amid a wider conflict.

Around the world, shutting down the internet has become an increasingly popular tactic of repressive and authoritarian regimes and some illiberal democracies. Digital rights groups say governments use them to stifle dissent, silence opposition voices or cover up human rights abuses, raising concerns about restricting freedom of speech.

Regimes often cut online access in response to protests or civil unrest, particularly around elections, as they try to keep their grip on power by restricting the flow of information, researchers say. It's the digital equivalent of seizing control of the local TV and radio station that was part of the pre-internet play-

book for despots.

"Internet shutdowns have been massively underreported or misreported over the years," said Alp Toker, founder of internet monitoring organization Netblocks. The world is "starting to realize what's happening," as documenting efforts like his expand, he said.

Last year there were 93 major internet shutdowns in 21 countries, according to a report by Top10VPN, a U.K.-based digital privacy and security research group. The list doesn't include places like China and North Korea, where the government tightly controls or restricts the internet. Shutdowns can range from all-encompassing internet blackouts to blocking social media platforms or severely throttling internet speeds, the report said.

Internet cuts have political, economic, and humanitarian costs, experts warned. The effects are exacerbated by COVID-19 lockdowns that are forcing activities like school classes online.

The shutdowns play into a wider battle over control of the internet. In the West, efforts to rein in social media platforms have raised competing concerns about restricting free speech and

limiting harmful information, the latter sometimes used by authoritarian regimes to justify clampdowns.

In Myanmar, internet access was cut for about 24 hours last weekend, in an apparent bid to head off protests against the army's seizing of power and the detention of leader Aung San Suu Kyi and her allies. By Sunday afternoon, internet users reported data access on their mobile phones was suddenly restored.

Norway's Telenor ASA, which runs one of Myanmar's main wireless carriers, said the communications ministry cited "circulation of fake news, stability of the nation and interest of the public" in ordering operators to temporarily shut down networks.

Telenor said it had to comply with local laws. "We deeply regret the impact the shutdown has on the people in Myanmar," it said.

It's a familiar move by Myanmar's government, which carried out one of the world's longest internet shutdowns in Rakhine and Chin states aimed at disrupting operations of an armed ethnic group. The cutoff began in June 2019 and was only lifted on Feb.

3.

Another long-running internet shutdown is in Ethiopia's Tigray region, which has been choked off since fighting started in early November -- the latest in a series of outages with no sign of service returning anytime soon. That's made it challenging to know how many civilians have been killed, to what extent fighting continues or whether people are starting to die of starvation, as some have warned.

In Uganda, restrictions on social media sites including Twitter, Facebook and YouTube took effect ahead of a Jan. 14 presidential election, along with a total internet blackout on the eve of polling. Authorities said it was to prevent opposition supporters from organizing potentially dangerous street protests.

The social media curbs were lifted Wednesday, except for Facebook. Longtime leader Yoweri Museveni, who was facing his biggest challenge to power yet from popular singer-turned-lawmaker Bobi Wine, had been angered by the social network's removal before the vote of what it said were fake accounts linked to his party.

In Belarus, the internet went down for 61 hours after the Aug. 9 presidential election, marking Europe's first internet blackout. Service was cut after election results handed victory to authoritarian President Alexander Lukashenko but the vote was widely seen as rigged and sparked enormous protests. Access remained unstable for months, particularly around weekend protests, when mobile internet service repeatedly went down.

The risk is that regular shutdowns become normalized, said Toker.

"You get a kind of Pavlovian response where both the public in the country and the wider international community will become desensitized to these shutdowns," he said, calling it the "greatest risk to our collective freedom in the digital age."

Internet shutdowns are also common in democratic India, where Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government has increasingly used them to target his political opposition. His Hindu nationalist government has ordered hundreds of regional shutdowns, according to a tracking site.

Most have been in disputed Kashmir, which endured an 18-month blockade of high-speed mobile service that ended last week. But they've also been deployed elsewhere for anti-government demonstrations, including massive farmers' protests that have rattled Modi's administration.

"It used to be authoritarian governments who did this, but we are seeing the practice become more common in democracies such as India," said Darrell West, a vice president of governance studies at the Brookings Institution who has studied internet shutdowns.

"The risk is that once one democracy does it, others will be tempted to do the same thing. It may start at the local level to deal with unrest, but then spread more broadly." □



# Ancient shell horn can still play a tune after 18,000 years



This combination of photos provided by researcher Carole Fritz in February 2021 shows two sides of a 12-inch (31 cm) conch shell discovered in a French cave with prehistoric wall paintings in 1931.

By **CHRISTINA LARSON**  
AP Science Writer

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — A large conch shell overlooked in a museum for decades is now thought to be the oldest known sea-shell instrument — and it still works, producing a deep, plaintive bleat, like a fog-horn from the distant past. The shell was found during the 1931 excavation of a cave with prehistoric wall paintings in the French Pyrenees and assumed to be a ceremonial drinking cup. Archaeologists from the University of Toulouse recently took a fresh look and determined it had been modified thousands of years ago to serve as a wind instrument. They invited a French horn player to play it.

"Hearing it for the first time, for me it was a big emotion — and a big stress," said archaeologist Carole Fritz. She feared that playing the 12-inch (31-centimeter) shell might damage it, but it didn't. The horn produced clear C, C sharp and D notes.

Conch shells have been used widely in musical and ceremonial traditions, including in ancient Greece, Japan, India and Peru. The shell instrument found in the Marsoulas cave is now the oldest known example. Previously, a conch shell instrument found in Syria had been dated to about 6,000 years old, said another Toulouse archaeologist, Gilles Tosello.

The latest discovery was made after a recent inven-

Crucially, the tip of the shell was broken off, creating a hole large enough to blow through. Microscopic inspection revealed the opening was the result of deliberate craftsmanship, not accidental wear, according to Tosello.

By inserting a tiny medical camera, they found that another hole had been carefully drilled in the shell's inner chamber. They also detected traces of red pigment on the mouth of the conch, matching a decorative pattern found on the wall of Marsoulas cave.

"This is classic, really solid archaeology," said Margaret Conkey, an archaeologist at the University of California, Berkeley, who was not

involved in the research. "This discovery reminds us that their lives were much richer and more complex than just stone tools and big game." □

## Casa del Mar 2BR/2B

Week 2/1113 (16k);  
Week 5/1315 (18k);  
Week 5&6/1521 (20k/Wk.);  
Week 7&8/1408 (18k/Wk.);  
Week 8/1113; 8/1409 (17k/Wk.);  
Week 9/1218 (15k);  
Week 10/1207 (15k);  
Week 11/1419 (13k); and,  
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## Associated Press

tory at the Natural History Museum of Toulouse. The researchers noticed some unusual holes in the shell.

## Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|   | 4 |   |   | 9 |   |   | 1 |   |
| 3 |   | 8 |   |   | 4 |   |   | 5 |
|   |   |   |   | 3 |   |   | 7 |   |
|   | 6 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 4 |   | 5 |   |   |   | 3 |   | 1 |
|   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 2 |   |
|   | 2 |   |   | 7 |   |   |   |   |
| 6 |   |   | 5 |   |   | 2 |   | 4 |
|   | 8 |   |   | 1 |   |   | 9 |   |

Difficulty Level ★★★★★

2/12

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## HEALTH

## DOCTOR ON DUTY

### Oranjestad

Hospital 7:00 pm / 10:00pm  
Tel. 527 4000

### San Nicolas

Imsan 24 hours  
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## PHARMACY ON DUTY

### Oranjestad:

Sta. Cruz Tel. 585 8028

### San Nicolas:

San Nicolas Tel. 584 5712

## OTHER

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Blood Bank Aruba 587 0002  
Urgent Care 586 0448  
Walk-In Doctor's Clinic  
+297 588 0539

## EMERGENCY

|                |          |
|----------------|----------|
| Police         | 100      |
| Oranjestad     | 527 3140 |
| Noord          | 527 3200 |
| Sta. Cruz      | 527 2900 |
| San Nicolas    | 584 5000 |
| Police Tipline | 11141    |
| Ambulancia     | 911      |
| Fire Dept.     | 115      |
| Red Cross      | 582 2219 |

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|                  |          |
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| Taxi D.T.S.      | 587 2300 |
| Taxi Serv. Aruba | 583 3232 |
| A1 Taxi Serv.    | 280 2828 |

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|                   |          |
|-------------------|----------|
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| American Airlines | 582 2700 |
| Avianca           | 588 0059 |
| Jet Blue          | 588 2244 |
| Surinam           | 582 7896 |

## AID FOUNDATIONS

FAVI- Visually Impaired  
Tel. 582 5051

Alcoholics Anonymous  
Tel. 736 2952

Narcotics Anonymous  
Tel. 583 8989

Fundacion Contra Violencia  
Relacional Tel. 583 5400

Centre for Diabetes  
Tel. 524 8888

Child Abuse Prevention  
Tel. 582 4433

Quota Club Tel. 525 2672

## General Info

Phone Directory Tel. 118



facebook.com/arubatoday/



# Blart Your Engines: James stars in new Netflix NASCAR comedy

By **DAN GELSTON**  
AP Sports Writer  
**DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. (AP)**

— Kevin James fancies himself an everyman in his comedic roles. He's worked as a mall cop and delivery driver. An unlucky zoo keeper and a retired police officer.

So it took the actor a moment to figure out how he might fit in a series set in a NASCAR garage.

"I don't know how it would work as a comedy," James said.

James said the light went off -- or is it, the green flag of an idea dropped -- when the show was framed as less about the inner workings of the industry and more about the relationships of a tight-knit racing team.

"It's the same as anything else. It's a workplace comedy, there's family, it's competitive," James said. "It's set on the greatest stage ever. It's insane what NASCAR is."

James stars as crew chief Kevin Gibson in Netflix's new comedy series, "The Crew," the latest in a line of NASCAR-themed TV shows and movies where the source material traditionally bordered on good ol' boys satire or sensationalism rather than reality.

How the "The Crew" how will land in the finishing order among past vehicles like "Days of Thunder," "Talladega Nights," "Cars," "Stroker Ace" or even "Six Pack" remains to be seen



This image released by Netflix shows Anthony Williams, from left, Dan Ahdoot and Kevin James in a scene from the comedy series "The Crew."

but the stock car door is open for a contender.

"People who don't love NASCAR will still love it because it's about the characters," James said.

James' only taste of NASCAR growing up on Long Island, New York, were the highlights aired on "Wide World of Sports" that led him to doodle images of Richard Petty ("I remember the mustache, the glasses, the cowboy hat") on school books. James later served as the grand marshal at a handful of NASCAR races, sometimes sharing duties with celebrity friends like Adam Sandler.

James plays an old-school crew chief for the fictional Bobby Spencer Racing team at odds with a new owner (Jillian Mueller) who wants to modernize the

dysfunctional team. Much like offbeat sponsors of the past such as Lightning McQueen's Dinoco, the team fields the No. 74 Fake Steak-sponsored car. NASCAR driver Reed Sorenson, driving for Spire Motorsports, raced last season at Michigan International Speedway in the Fake Steak car for footage featured in the series.

NASCAR cooperated with the project and James was coached for the role by long-time crew chief Tony Gibson. Ryan Blaney, Austin Dillon and Cole Custer are among the drivers who came on the show that debuts Monday.

"It's supposed to be a lighthearted, funny, sitcom show in front of a live audience and I think they did good," Blaney said.

**Associated Press**

"They're not really trying to make us look bad, they're just doing something that I think it's really gonna get people watching NASCAR."

Jeff Lowell, a writer and producer of the show, tweeted the series would try and avoid the cliches that often paint NASCAR and its fans as simple-minded bumpkins or stereotypically Southern.

"Our goal is to not have it ring false to fans. And although 'Talladega Nights' was funny, that's not at all the tone we're going for," he said.

**"TALLADEGA NIGHTS"**

Baseball, boxing, golf, most sports have scores of movies that fans can debate which is the best of the genre ("Field of Dreams" vs. "Bull Durham"). "Talla-

dega Nights: The Ballad of Ricky Bobby" is the undisputed champ in the stock car racing niche thank to a fearless Ricky Bobby (Will Ferrell) who lived by the creed "If you ain't first, you're last." The 2006 film followed Ricky Bobby as he went from a fervently clueless doofus to down-on-his luck driver to, well, a clueless doofus again, though with a tinge of humility. The movie spoofs everything from sponsorship -- hello, Wonder Bread -- to an unsophisticated fan base that counts dinner at Applebee's as a big night out. So what if the movie didn't exactly paint NASCAR in the most flattering light? Ferrell's vulgar shake 'n' bake charm helped "Talladega Nights" rake in \$163 million.

**"DAYS OF THUNDER"**

"He didn't slam you, he didn't bump you, he didn't nudge you... he 'rubbed' you. And rubbin', son, is racin'." - crew chief Harry Hogge.

Tom Cruise made NASCAR sexy as Cole Trickle. "Days of Thunder" was a critically panned summer blockbuster that was largely lampooned throughout the NASCAR industry for its exaggeration and overindulgence. But it developed a cult-like following and today's drivers grew up with a fondness for the movie. Pitbull, NASCAR's newest team owner, credited the 1990 flick with igniting his interest in the sport.

# Springsteen charged with drunken driving; Jeep ad on pause



This Oct. 23, 2019 file photo shows Bruce Springsteen at the world premiere of HBO Documentary Films' "Very Ralph" in New York. Associated Press

**HIGHLANDS, N.J. (AP)** — Bruce Springsteen is facing a drunken driving charge

in New Jersey, prompting Jeep to put on pause the Super Bowl television com-

mercial that features him. Springsteen was arrested Nov. 14 in a part of the Gateway National Recreation Area on the New Jersey coast, a spokesperson for the National Park Service confirmed Wednesday.

The park is on a narrow, beach-ringed peninsula, with views across a bay to New York City. It is about 15 miles north of Asbury Park, where Springsteen got his start as a musician and bandleader and which was later made famous with his debut album, "Greetings from Asbury Park, N.J."

Springsteen lives in Colts Neck, about 12 miles from the site of the arrest.

Springsteen received citations for driving while under the influence, reckless driving and consuming alcohol in a closed area. The spokesperson said Springsteen was cooperative.

A message was left seeking comment with Springsteen's publicist.

The news of the arrest came on the heels of two high-profile appearances by Springsteen.

On Jan. 20, Springsteen performed as part of President Joe Biden's inaugura-

tion, singing "Land of Hope and Dreams" in front of the Lincoln Memorial.

While during Sunday's Super Bowl, he appeared in a Jeep ad filmed in Kansas that urged people to find common ground.□

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# Feeling pressure: 2020 champ Kenin loses at Australian Open

By JOHN PYE  
AP Sports Writer

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP)

— Sofia Kenin knew this would be a tough test at the Australian Open, a potentially early end to her first attempt to defend a Grand Slam title.

Upon realizing she probably would be playing big-hitting veteran Kaia Kanepi in the second round, Kenin acknowledged, she “maybe kind of broke down a little bit.”

Kenin was right to be worried. And, with Kanepi at her best, this one was over quickly. Delivering 10 aces, Kanepi powered her way past the fourth-seeded Kenin, overwhelming the 2020 champion 6-3, 6-2 in only 64 minutes on Thursday.

“I obviously felt like I’m not there 100% — physically, mentally, my game. Everything just feels real off, obviously. It’s not good,” Kenin said at her news conference, where she wiped away tears. “I mean, I just — I know I couldn’t really handle the pressure.”

One person who knows how to defend a major title is Rafael Nadal, who shares the men’s record of 20 with Roger Federer.

Nadal shrugged off some heckling from a spectator before beating 177th-



United States’ Sofia Kenin leaves the court following her second round loss to Estonia’s Kaia Kanepi during at the Australian Open tennis championship in Melbourne, Australia, Thursday, Feb. 11, 2021.

Associated Press

ranked Michael Mmoh 6-1, 6-4, 6-2 in the last night match, showing no signs of the back soreness that has bothered him.

Nadal was serving for the second set at 5-4 when a woman yelled out and made hand gestures as he prepared to serve. She yelled again at 30-0 and stadium security escorted her out of Rod Laver Arena. As the rest of the crowd started booing the woman, Nadal laughed.

After the brief delay, he hit two aces to finish off the set. He wrapped up the match 1 hour, 47 minutes. Nadal said it was a “positive evening.” Except for one strange thing. Asked if he knew the unruly spectator, Nadal said he didn’t “and, honestly, I don’t want to know.”

In the preceding match on the main show court, fifth-seeded Elina Svitolina beat 16-year-old Coco Gauff 6-4, 6-3, knocking the

youngest player out of the draw. Gauff had a breakout major in Melbourne last year, reaching the round of 16 with wins over Venus Williams and Naomi Osaka before losing to Kenin. But Svitolina was just too consistent when it counted, saving all four break points she faced and converting on two of the three she had on Gauff’s serve.

Gauff said she stayed calm and was playing at a higher standard of tennis than

last year, but it wasn’t quite enough.

Kanepi said her winning performance wasn’t merely a case of taking advantage of Kenin’s nerves because “I was nervous, too ... playing the defending champion, that was the thought.”

Kanepi, 35, had beaten Kenin, 22, in their only previous matchup, part of why this was not a contest the American was looking forward to. Plus, Kanepi has been successful against some of the best on the biggest stages, with seven victories over Top 10 opponents at Grand Slam tournaments, including against then-No. 1 Simona Halep at the 2018 U.S. Open.

And then there was recent form.

Kenin walked off the court crying after a 6-2, 6-2 loss last week in a tuneup event at the site of the Australian Open and explained afterward that her left leg was sore. Kanepi, meanwhile, put an end to No. 7-ranked Aryna Sabalenka’s 15-match winning streak last week and had won 16 of her past 17 outings.

With serves topping 175 kph (110 mph), Kanepi saved all seven break points she faced. And she wound up with a 22-10 edge in winners. □

## Tennis, everyone? Participation up 22% in 2020, survey says

WHITE PLAINS, N.Y. (AP) — Tennis, everyone?

The sport played by Serena Williams and Roger Federer was a hit last year, with recreational participation rising 22% in the United States, according to an annual survey from the Physical Activity Council.

In a release announcing the survey results, U.S. Tennis Association CEO Mike Dowse tied that increase to tennis’s status as an “ideal social distancing sport” during the coronavirus pandemic.

About 21.5 million people picked up a racket and

headed to a court in 2020. There were nearly 3 million new players, a 44% increase from a year earlier. According to the USTA, the Tennis Industry Association found that entry-level racket sales went up nearly 40%. The USTA is one of eight sports associations listed as partners on the Physical Activity Council’s website, which says the survey uses a representative panel of more than 1 million Americans and includes about 18,000 online interviews.

The survey examined people about more than 120 activities. □



United States’ Serena Williams makes a backhand return to Serbia’s Nina Stojanovic during their second round match at the Australian Open tennis championship in Melbourne, Australia, Wednesday, Feb. 10, 2021.

Associated Press





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## Raptors to keep calling Tampa home for rest of season

By **TIM REYNOLDS**  
AP Basketball Writer

The Toronto Raptors aren't going back to Toronto this season.

Ongoing challenges related to the coronavirus pandemic and how that affects the process of crossing the border between the U.S. and Canada will keep the Raptors in their adopted Tampa, Florida, home for the remainder of the regular season, the team said Thursday.

The Raptors are 6-5 in their "home" building this season, Amalie Arena, which they're sharing with the Stanley Cup champion Tampa Bay Lightning. Tampa also has the reigning Super Bowl champion Buccaneers and the Tampa Bay Rays played in the World Series last season.

"Florida has been really welcoming to us and we're so grateful for the hospitality we've found in Tampa



**Toronto Raptors forward Pascal Siakam (43) passes the ball over Orlando Magic guard Terrence Ross (31) during the second half of an NBA basketball game Sunday, Jan. 31, 2021, in Tampa, Fla.**

Associated Press

and at Amalie — we're living in a city of champions, and we intend to carry on the tradition of winning for our new friends and fans here," Raptors President Masai Ujiri said. "But home is where the heart is, and our hearts are in Toronto. We think often of our fans, of our Scotiabank Arena

family, and all those we are missing back home, and we can't wait until we can all be together again."

The decision is hardly unexpected given the state of the pandemic in the U.S. and Canada. Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced Tuesday that starting next week

any nonessential travelers arriving in Canada by land will need to show a negative PCR-based COVID-19 test or face a fine if they don't have one.

That wouldn't be an issue for NBA teams; traveling parties are tested daily, players multiple times a day.

The bigger issue is logistics. The land border already remains closed to nonessential travelers who are not Canadian citizens; Canada requires those entering the country to isolate for 14 days, which wouldn't be feasible for NBA teams, and the Canadian government has also strongly discouraged nonessential travel for any reason.

Toronto made the move south last fall, knowing Thursday's decision was a real possibility.

The Raptors tried to simulate the comforts the team has at home in Toronto,

at least as much as possible. "We The North" — the team motto — signage is everywhere in the hotel that the Raptors are using as a practice facility in Tampa, from the elevator doors to the ballroom wall behind one of the baskets. The court that the Raptors use for games was shipped down from Toronto.

And there's a 2019 world championship banner swaying from the rafters, alongside the Lightning's retired jerseys for Vincent Lecavalier and Martin St. Louis, at the same end of the court as the Raptors' bench.

"They did a great job," Raptors guard Fred VanVleet said earlier this season. The NBA is preparing to release the schedule for the second half of the season — mid-March through mid-May — later this month. The playoffs will run from mid-May through mid-July. □

## AP source: NHL adding game-day rapid COVID-19 testing

By **JOHN WAWROW**  
AP Hockey Writer

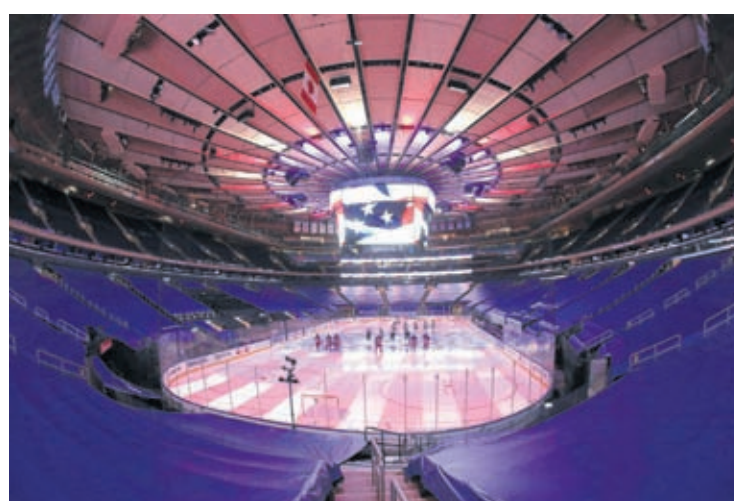
The NHL is adding a game-day rapid tests for players to its safety protocols in its latest bid to stem potential COVID-19 outbreaks among its teams, a person with direct knowledge of the situation told The Associated Press on Thursday. Rapid tests provide results within a half-hour, and will augment daily PCR testing already in place, which is similar to the protocols the NBA introduced this season. PCR tests are considered to be more accurate, but there's a 12-24 hour turnaround on results.

The move was confirmed by the person who spoke on the condition of ano-

nymity because the league had not yet released its updated protocol.

The decision comes two days after Vegas Golden Knights forward Tomas Nosek tested positive but was not quarantined until after playing the first two periods of a 5-4 win over Anaheim. And it comes on the same day the league delayed the start of Edmonton's game at Montreal to complete contact tracing and testing after an Oilers player tested positive.

The Oilers became the first of the league's seven Canadian team to encounter a virus-related disturbance a little under a month into the season. Otherwise, the 35 postponed games have



**The New York Rangers prepare to play against the Boston Bruins in an NHL hockey game Wednesday, Feb. 10, 2021, in New York.**

Associated Press

all involved teams in the three U.S.-based divisions in place for this season.

The NHL currently has paused the seasons of four

teams: the Buffalo Sabres, Minnesota Wild, New Jersey Devils and Philadelphia Flyers, though others have also been idled.

Golden Knights forward Mark Stone welcomed the NHL's decision to add rapid testing.

"I think now with the reapid testing getting in place is going to help," Stone said. "We're to know more before the games, which is ultimately what we want."

The NHL upgraded its safety protocols last week, too. It had teams remove glass panels from behind each bench for better air flow, while also spacing players at least 6 feet apart in their locker rooms.

Teams were also told not to show up at arenas until one hour, 45 minutes before faceoff unless players need pregame treatment or preparation. □